AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

1.   (Currently Amended) A node in an Ethernet network to relay ~~the~~an Ethernet ~~frame~~frame, comprising:

an element which inserts two or more VLAN tags into said frame and removes an other said inserted VLAN tag in ~~the~~a relay process of said frame.

2.   (Currently Amended) A node as set forth in claim 1 further comprising

an element which replaces two or more VLAN tags of said frame at a time.

3.   (Currently Amended) A node as set forth in claim 1 further comprising:

an element which administrates said two or more VLAN tags using ~~the~~a forwarding table memory for a change of frame contents during a frame relay.

4.   (Currently Amended) A node as set forth in claim 1 further comprising

an element which searches ~~the~~a forwarding table memory using ~~the~~an information from two or more VLAN tags in said frame during a frame relay.

5.   (Currently Amended) A node as set forth in claim 1 further comprising

an element which searches ~~the~~a forwarding table memory in ~~the~~a relay process of said frame with ~~combining~~a combination of ~~the~~an information from two or more VLAN tags in said frame and ~~the~~an input port, ~~the~~a destination MAC address, ~~the~~a source MAC address and ~~the~~a TYPE field information.

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6.   (Currently Amended) A node as set forth in claim 1 further comprising an element which~~which~~:

provides a TTL area to show ~~the~~a survival time of ~~the~~a frame in said VLAN tag inserted to said ~~frame~~frame: ~~and~~

checks whether said survival time has elapsed or not by ~~the~~a value in said TTL ~~area~~area; and

discards said frame after elapse of said survival time without relaying ~~it~~said frame in ~~the~~a relay process of said frame.

7.   (Currently Amended) A node as set forth in claim 6 further comprising

an element which decrements the value in said TTL area by one every time said frame is relayed.

8.   (Original) A node as set forth in claim 1 wherein

node control information is stored to said VLAN tag.

9.   (Currently Amended) A node as set forth in claim 1 further comprising

an element which changes ~~the~~a self-node status administration corresponding to ~~the~~a ~~contents~~content of said VLAN tag.

10.   (Currently Amended) A node as set forth in claim 1 wherein

~~the~~a node status is stored to ~~the~~an area of said VLAN tag in the relayed frame

corresponding to ~~the~~a self-node status.

11. (Currently Amended) A frame transfer method of ~~the~~a node to relay ~~the~~an Ethernet ~~frame comprising~~frame, said method comprising:

receiving an Ethernet frame in said node;

~~a step of~~inserting two or more VLAN tags to said Ethernet frame at a time or removing said inserted VLAN ~~tags in the relay process of said frame.~~tags; and

forwarding said Ethernet frame.

12. (Currently Amended) A frame transfer method as set forth in claim ~~11~~11, wherein a forwarding table memory for frame contents change during a frame relay is used for administration of said two or more VLAN tags.

13. (Currently Amended) A frame transfer method as set forth in claim ~~11~~11, wherein a forwarding table memory is searched during a frame relay using ~~the~~an information from two or more VLAN tags in said frame.

14. (Currently Amended) A frame transfer method as set forth in claim ~~11~~11, wherein a forwarding table memory is searched in ~~the~~a relay process of said frame with ~~combining~~a combination of ~~the~~an information from two or more VLAN tags in said frame and ~~the~~an input port, ~~the~~a destination MAC address, ~~the~~a source MAC address and ~~the~~a TYPE field information.

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15.   (Currently Amended) A frame transfer method as set forth in claim ~~11~~11, wherein:

a TTL area to show ~~the~~a survival time of the frame is provided in said VLAN tag that is inserted to said ~~frame~~frame; ~~and~~

whether said survival time has been elapsed or not is checked by ~~the~~a value in said TTL ~~area~~area; and

said frame after elapse of said survival time is discarded without being relayed in the relay process of said frame.

16.   (Currently Amended) A frame transfer method as set forth in claim ~~15~~15, wherein the value in said TTL area is decremented by one every time said frame is relayed.

17.   (Currently Amended) A frame transfer method as set forth in claim ~~11~~11, wherein a node control information is stored to said VLAN tag.

18.   (Currently Amended) A frame transfer method as set forth in claim ~~11~~11, further comprising:

changing ~~the~~a self-node status administration corresponding to ~~the~~ contents of said VLAN tag.

19.   (Currently Amended) A frame transfer method as set forth in claim ~~11~~11, wherein a node status is stored to said VLAN tag area in the relayed frame corresponding to ~~the~~a self-node status.